

STORM WARNINGS

*Anarchist bulletin
for the social war*

.....
49 – January 15 2022



| Industrial revival |

These days, a few timid snowflakes sprinkle the plains, forests and hills of eastern Belgrade. The mercury is struggling to rise above zero in the Serbian capital. On this second weekend of January, new days of action are planned against the project to open the largest lithium mine in Europe (58,000 tons per year), launched by the Anglo-Australian group *Rio Tinto*. For several months, thousands of people have been taking part in demonstrations, but above all in road blockades throughout the country. The environmental devastation planned by this mining project in the Jadar Valley has been the trigger for an “ecological revolt” that is gradually threatening the stability of the autocratic regime. And while the massive protests have not given rise to any more pronounced hostilities in a country that is particularly devastated by industrial pollution, the Serbian government is beginning to consider it more prudent to temporarily *suspend* the arrival of the mining giant *Rio Tinto*.

The day after these new days of action, and

while a handful of activists were throwing eggs at the *Rio Tinto* information office in Loznica, an illustrious French industrialist was present in Paris for a small function organized in the buildings of the Ministry of the Economy. On January 10, Philippe Varin solemnly handed over to the authorities his report on *securing the supply from the industry of mineral raw materials*. Varin can boast a fine record of achievement: he began his career with steel groups, then became director of the *PSA Peugeot Citroën* group, where he led the industrial restructuring, and then spent time with the nuclear group *Orano* (formerly *Areva*), where he led the restructuring as chairman of the board of directors and was responsible for the completion of the EPR nuclear reactor in Finland. Until the end of November 2020, Varin was also the head of the *France Industrie* lobby. It is in this capacity that he was asked by the government to write this famous report, the precise content of which will not be made public because it “contains sensitive data and industrial secrets”.

DECEMBER 2021

7-8/12, Vienna (Austria).

A public charging station for electric cars of *Wiener Energie* is set on fire in Zinnergasse, and the next day the same takes place in Schlechtgasse. "*For a diffusion of the attacks against green capitalism! For anti-civ anarchy!*" concludes the claim.

13/12, Nuremberg (Germany).

In Bavaria, two antennas of the criminal police center go up in smoke in the Marienbergpark and at the *Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF)*. "*We have no interest in the police being able to coordinate and synchronize their activities throughout the city's neighborhoods. It is against them that our action is directed; the emergency services and fire brigade do not need a seamless connection in order to work;*" the claim says.

14/12, Marcillac (France).

In Aveyron, two of the new video surveillance cameras installed in the town were sabotaged: one disappeared after being ripped from its support, the second was blinded by cutting its power cables.

14/12, Berlin (Germany).

Following the death of a young Greek immigrant in a police cell, the advertising agency *Glow* "*which legitimizes the police with its propaganda in their favor*", and the training center *BWK* "*which offers courses for aspiring cops*" are attacked in the night.

16/12, Poindimié (France).

In the colony of New Caledonia, two vehicles of gendarmes parked on the parking lot of

Beyond the technical data covered by state secrecy, the substance of the report seems nevertheless quite clear. The slowdown in supply and the blocking of logistics chains, partly due to Covid and its related measures, have put a strain on the European economy, raising once again its dependence on raw materials such as copper, cobalt and rare metals, on finished products such as semiconductors and other electronic components used in production processes still located in Europe, and finally on energy sources such as gas and oil. On the other hand, the *energy and digital transition*, which seems to be the main focus of capitalism's new great transformation and the bewildering response to the climate disaster, is fueling the industrial enthusiasm to continue the headlong rush, with a renewed faith in technology, which still means and will always mean an intensification of raw material extraction.

The demand is exploding for metals needed to build wind turbines, solar panels, electric cars, batteries, electronic components, and everything else that makes up the infrastructure of the connected world, and even the most timid forecasts estimate that their consumption will *double* in the coming decades. For some metals, such as lithium, an essential component of batteries, which are in turn the fundamental building blocks of an electrified economy, forecasts by the *International Energy Agency (IEA)* even suggest a staggering 40-fold increase in global demand by 2040. For cobalt, most of which is mined in the Congo, forecasts are for a 24-fold increase. Unsurprisingly, prices are soaring and metals are crystallizing as a formidable factor of instability for the world's economies. Their economic and military importance (in addition to green technologies, defense systems - from fighter jets to drones and missiles - are also desperate for rare metals) places them at the heart of geopolitical conflicts and more or less latent trade wars, all the more so since China is the undisputed leading producer. "*We are entering a metals super-cycle*," said a leading hedge fund trader in reaction to the Varin report. The surge in prices is then having a snowball effect on the markets, making difficult and delicate extractions with previously exorbitant costs increasingly profitable. But basically, as dependence on raw materials will continue to grow, extraction activities will multiply anyway.

Strategic and critical raw materials

It should therefore come as no surprise that European states are now seriously considering reopening mines, especially since European subsoils are full of metals that

were not of great interest in the past, but have now become “critical”, such as lithium. For some years now, the European Union has been drawing up an annual report to indicate which raw materials are considered strategic and critical¹, where a disruption in supply (coming largely from outside) could undermine its national economies. To counter this critical dependence, which will only become more pronounced as they move towards the energy and digital transition, the revival of mining activities and the opening of mineral refineries are being considered in many European countries.

In France, while a few mines are still in operation², several research permits for metals on this European list (which do not necessarily lead to a mining project) are underway, notably in Bas-Rhin for lithium (extraction of lithium from brine, a process described as “environmentally friendly” by the operator *Eramet*); Haute Vienne and the Basque Country for gold, rare earths and tungsten; and in Ariège for the latter. In other countries, the political hesitations for a revival of mining are finally disappearing in the face of the undeniable: if European economies want to stay in the race and in anticipation of increased geopolitical instabilities (around access to raw materials, in the face of climate change, around military hegemonies on certain territories, etc.), “*nothing should be forbidden*”, as the French Minister of Ecological Transition summed up so well a few days after the Varin report. “*Nothing should be forbidden*”, contrary to what the chemical giant *Rhône-Poulenc* (now *Solvay*), which is generally not very careful about pollution, had decided in the 1990s. Rather than continue the extremely harmful and radioactive activity of its rare earths refinery in La Rochelle, which accounted for 50% of world production, the giant decided to relocate it to China. A former manager summed up the decision laconically: “*There was shit we didn’t want, that’s what it comes down to.*”

This “shit” that we no longer want to ban is the other side of *green tech* and the energy and digital transition. Rare metals are so-named not because they are “rare,” but because they are mixed with abundant metals (such as iron or copper) in the earth’s crust in often minute proportions. They are called “rare” because they are difficult to detect, extract and chemically separate from others. Among the rare metals such as cobalt, gallium, tantalum or tungsten, there are also the “rare earths”, a family of 17 metals particularly prized by the technology industry whose extraction and separation are particularly complicated and polluting. Their storage even represents serious risks linked to carcinogenic and radioactive fumes. The extraction of all these rare metals, which is essential to the energy and digital transition, also requires im-

their hotel (a troop transport and a 4x4) are set on fire around 4 am after having been sprayed with gasoline.

17/12, Leipzig (Germany). Arson attack on a car dealership: two SUVs and two other vehicles are destroyed by flames. The previous week, other SUVs were already targeted by arsonists on several occasions. In Leipzig, as in other cities, there are dozens of cases of intentional tire punctures in SUVs, which are also the subject of claims against climate change.

17/12, Grenoble (France). In Isère, following the eviction in the middle of winter of the Alliance Park encampment and the closure of the one on rue des alliés, a car of the detention center builder *Eiffage* takes blows to its windshield and a car-sharing *Citiz* car is burned. The claim calls for “*putting pressure on the mayor’s office and its allies by attacking the equipment and people who make this nice system work.*”

17/12, Gisors (France) In Eure, the Christmas ice rink turns into a pond after two teenage girls sabotage it by perforating its glycol pipes in three places, the liquid used to produce artificial ice.

12-18/12, Netherlands At about 3am along the A50 freeway, near the town of Epe, a cell phone antenna was set on fire on December 12. Five days later, still along the A50, two more antennas were set on fire around 2 am in the same area of the province of Gelderland, near the towns of

Loenen and Beekbergen. Finally, on 18 December, the electrical box of another one was demolished in Zeewolde (Flevoland province), again cutting off the cell phone connection in the area.

20-28/12, Paris/Vincennes (France).

During several nights, different companies exploiting prisoners were targeted: *Séphora* (LVMH group) whose automatic opening system of the entrance door was sabotaged and whose windows were broken, as well as the stores *Les Récupérables* and *La Pinata* whose windows were tagged with for example "*Collaborator with prisons*", "*exploiter*" or "*Freedom for all*".

20/12, Pont-l'Abbé (France)

In Finistère around 10:30 pm, 180 shopping carts and their shelters of the shopping center *Leclerc* are destroyed by an arson a few days before Christmas.

20/12, Barcelona (Spain).

The headquarters of the civil servants' union *CSIF*, which counts hacks and cops among its ranks, loses a window while the tag "*Torturers - Freedom for the prisoners of 27F - (A)*" is left next to it.

23/12, Magdeburg (Germany).

The car of Martin Schock, deputy of the board of the neo-Nazi party *Neue Stärke* (New Force) is wrecked in the night - broken windows and flat tires.

24/12, Genoa (Italy).

An electric pylon with high tension belonging to *Terna* [Italian equivalent of RTE] is burned with some cans of gasoline by *Anarchists for the destruction of*

mense amounts of energy, water and chemicals. The simple extraction ratios can give an idea of the mountain of rocks to be extracted: to obtain 1 kg of gallium, it is necessary to extract on average 50 tons of rocks; for 1 kg of vanadium, 8.5 tons; for 1 kg of lutetium, 1200 tons...

After extraction with acids, the rocks are then washed with a mixture of water (200 m³ per ton) and chemical additives, hence the multiplication of highly toxic artificial lakes like those of the Baotou region in China (which ensures 95% of the world's production of rare earths), a sad smoky mirror of the cancer rates of the population of Inner Mongolia, northwest of Beijing. From Latin America (where the triangle of white gold, lithium, is located, with operations in Chile, Bolivia and Argentina accounting for a quarter of the world's production) to Australia, mining activities leave behind a trail of toxic lakes and territories that have become chemical dumps.

In addition to betting on a revival of this type of mining activity on European soil (with projects already underway, such as lithium extraction in Portugal, Austria and Finland), European industrialists also intend to position themselves in the raw materials recycling sector. With the current flood of electronic products and their programmed obsolescence, this avenue seems to attract a lot of hope, especially since "recycling" can be equated with "green" ... and therefore with ecological transition. It doesn't matter then that given the industrial and chemical processes used to recycle metals, it looks more like a second form of extraction that is deferred in time, requiring, like the mining activity, new and enormous quantities of energy resources while producing new mountains of industrial waste. For this "recycling" aspect, huge European funds have been granted to countless research projects and other "innovative" industrial projects.

The front lines drawn by the transition

The revival of mining, re-industrialization through the construction of refineries and new factories, and the establishment of recycling plants are all part of the same strategic package. Slovak diplomat Šefčovič, vice president of the European Commission since 2020, summed up this agenda in a "call to action" by the *European Alliance for Raw Materials* lobby: "*Our strategic forecast clearly shows that the demand for critical raw materials will increase, even more so with the ongoing transition to a green and digital economy. [...] The European Alliance for Raw Materials will help increase our capacity and investment along the entire*

value chain, from extraction through processing to recycling. This will strengthen our resilience and strategic autonomy."

In terms of industrial capacity, many European governments are in the process of allocating significant amounts of money to help fund new projects. Still related to lithium, we can cite, for example, those projects currently underway to establish "*gigafactories*", i.e. giant industrial complexes dedicated to the production of batteries, key elements in the all-electrical industry³. In France, such projects are underway in Douvrin, Douai, Grenoble, Belfort and Saint-Fons. One of the recommendations of the Varin report is the creation of a private-public investment fund to support these factory projects, as well as the establishment of two industrial hubs, one in Dunkirk (north of France) for metals, and the second in Lacq (south-west of France) for magnets, refineries, the manufacture of battery precursors (cathodes, anodes), and recycling.

As the European raw materials lobby has pointed out, and there is no doubt that the Varin report contains the same urgent appeal, it is within the next two years that decisions should be made, permits granted and projects launched. If the construction of a battery or magnet factory, a refinery or a rare metal recycling plant generally takes between 2 and 5 years, if the launch of rare metal extraction in existing or new mines takes between 8 and 15 years, in the absence of "action", European economies would, according to them, be at great risk of sinking under the weight of total import dependence within a decade. Such medium-term forecasts are obviously based on the questionable assumption that this famous transition will continue more or less steadily - and certainly not be disrupted by instability factors such as revolts or climate change.

However, if we combine them with the enormous efforts made to multiply energy sources, they clearly indicate the contours of the monster to be confronted: *an industrial revival fueled by an even more massive use of energy and resource extraction that is unprecedented in human history*.⁴ It is in this context that we must also place the latest energy projects announced, such as the revival of nuclear power, the doubling of wind power capacity, the implementation of geothermal projects, the reactivation of gas power plants, or the strengthening of European interconnections, which are intended to respond to the challenges of the new economy that is emerging on the horizon.

the existent. The latter specify in particular in their communiqué in solidarity with incarcerated companions, on the run or under surveillance: "the hope was, remains and will remain that of definitively extinguishing the energy supply system, beating heart of this sick world of consumption and opulence, devastation, wars and death."

24/12, Saint-Pierre-des-Corps (France).

In Indre-et-Loire around 1:30 am, the car of a deputy mayor (DVD) is set on fire in front of her home, while around 3 am it is the front door of another one which is blackened by the flames.

24/12, Villeneuve-Saint-Georges (France).

In Val-de-Marne, around 9:30 pm, the vehicle of a deputy mayor (DVD) burned down in front of her home while she was celebrating Christmas elsewhere.

25/12, Asse (Belgium).

On the grounds of *Carro-Bel*, a construction company, 32 trucks went up in smoke, destroying its entire fleet. According to the investigators, it was an arson attack.

25/12, Lyon (France).

Around 8:30 pm in the district of La Duchère, a video surveillance camera is destroyed by gunshots.

25/12, Paris (France).

Some anarchists set fire to a car of the building contractor Eiffage, and a second one which had a diplomatic plate in the 20th district. "Fire to the prisons, to the companies that build them and to the world that needs them. Solidarity means attack", says the communiqué in solidarity with the Chilean anarchist Francisco Solar.

27/12, Gratkorn (Austria).
North of Graz, two excavators of the company *Energie Steiermark* go up in smoke in the night on the site of the hydroelectric power station of Gratkorn that is under construction. *"Solidarity with all struggles against exploitation and devastation worldwide! Whether in Vienna, in Mexico against the Maya Train or against the giant dams of the last rivers in the Balkans. Down with the machines that destroy living spaces"*, the claim states.

29/12, Chambly (France).
In the Oise, the car and the garage of the *LREM* deputy are destroyed by an arson attack around 3am. The tags *"Vote no"* and *"It will explode"*, in reference to the law establishing the future vaccine pass, are left on the adjacent wall.

30/12, Calais (France).
In Pas-de-Calais, dozens of CRS and gendarmes were attacked with stones by migrants following the eviction of their camp: 15 CRS ended up in hospital.

31/12, Milan (Italy).
A communiqué announced that one winter night, an explosive device placed on the threshold of the *Unicredit* bank in the Barona district destroyed its entrance and the adjacent cash machines. *"In a world where banks have the power to determine the course of markets and the lives of people, the direct attack against such structures is one of the best weapons of struggle"*, says the text in solidarity with anarchist prisoners around the world.

31/12, France
In spite of a strong police deployment, the traditional competition took place in the four corners of the territory, with 648 fires started which caused 874

In the end, on reflection, there is nothing new under the sun. Since the emergence of cities, economic power has basically always walked on the same two feet: energy and extraction. From slavery to nuclear power, economic progress adds up the energy sources that give more and more power to the dominant, and vice versa, because it is the exploitation of energy sources that directly fuels domination. Just as the extraction of oil has released a massive energy force, millions of years old, giving unprecedented dimensions to industrialism and war on a global scale, the digital and electrified economy depends on the speed of extraction of the metals it needs. This is how the front lines are drawn, where terrible battles are and will be fought. To upset their forecasts, to transform opportunities and situations into factors of disorder and unpredictability, to scrutinize these front lines where the enemy is certainly confident, but nevertheless more vulnerable than elsewhere, to throw oneself into the conflicts that are taking shape by bringing direct action without delay, these are battle cries that could put us actively on the tracks of the enemy.



1. In this case: antimony, hafnium, phosphorus, barite, heavy and light rare earths, scandium, beryllium, silicon carbide, bismuth, indium, tantalum, borate, magnesium, tungsten, cobalt, natural graphite, vanadium, coking coal, natural rubber, bauxite, fluorite, niobium, lithium, gallium, metals of the platinum group, titanium, germanium, phosphate rock, strontium.
2. Today, the vast majority of the extractive activity in France is represented by the substances of the 2700 quarries (aggregates, industrial minerals, ornamental and construction rocks) spread over the whole territory. As far as mines are concerned, there are salt mines (Landes, Lorraine, Rhone corridor), bituminous limestone mines (Ain), bauxite mines (Hérault), tantalum-niobium-tin mines (Echassières in Allier). In the colonies, there are gold mines in Guyana and nickel mines in New Caledonia.
3. Renewable energies are so-called intermittent sources, whose energy production depends on an external factor (the power of the wind, the sun,...) unlike fossil fuel power plants (gas, coal or nuclear) whose production can be adjusted continuously according to demand (a balance on which the stability of the electrical network also depends). In order to store electricity and inject it into the grid at the right time, many research projects are underway (hydrogen batteries, *smart grids* where energy production is controlled in real time by algorithms, inter-

connections between countries to stabilize national networks). Similarly, the electrification of transport requires batteries to be able to store and inject electrical energy at the right time. Hence the crucial importance of batteries in the energy transition.

4. Since global metal consumption is growing at a rate of 3-5% per year, the *National Alliance for the Coordination of Scientific Research* (ANCRE) report *Mineral Resources and Energy* stated in June 2015 that “to meet global needs by 2050, we will need to extract more metals from the sub-soil than humanity has extracted since its origin.”

burned cars for the New Year.

12/31, Arlon (Belgium).
Three prisoners seize the evening of New Year's Eve to attempt something beautiful during the evening walk: two of them climb a first wall, then reach the 'no mans land', and then cross the second fence before disappearing in the forest. The third one, who went another way, is arrested before recovering his freedom.

JANUARY 2022

1/1, Athens (Greece).
In eight different neighborhoods, 24 ATMs are sabotaged in solidarity with the evicted squat *Biologica* in Thessaloniki. “10, 100, 1000 occupations!”, concludes the claim.

1/1, Bremen (Germany).
Autonomous anti-militarists smashed several windows of the arms company *Orbitale Hochtechnologie Bremen* (OHB) and then set fire to the offices. “OHB is considered a renowned space and high-tech group. Since the 1950s, OHB has mainly built satellite-based systems used for military purposes.” Several offices on two floors are ravaged by flames, while the rest of the building suffers from smoke and soot.

2/1, Thessaloniki (Greece).
The *Casus Belli Cell / Direct Action Cells* claim responsibility for the arson attack against the construction company *Praxis*, in response to the eviction of the occupied space *Biologica*. The company *Praxis* was hired to carry out the demolition work of the former squat. “Our attack is the first action of practical solidarity, in a milieu of struggle that defends squatters and self-managed areas of struggle, solidarity and attack to the

end," concludes the claim.

2/1, Höchberg (Germany).
In Bavaria, an antenna station goes up in smoke around 3:50 am. The fire started from the bottom cables and went up the mast.

4/1/, Athens (Greece).
'For the diffusion of the anarchist fire' claims an ambush against a police patrol. In the attack, which took place in mid-December, molotovs were thrown at a patrol in response to, among other things, the murder of young Sampanis in October 2021. "We will avenge all those who have been murdered by the state, capital and patriarchy."

4/1, Belfort/Cravanche (France).
In Franche-Comté, two new vehicles of the *Optymo* urban car-sharing system go up in smoke overnight, bringing the total to six since September.

4/1, Sézegnin (Switzerland).
In the canton of Geneva, two cars of the cement group *Holcim* are set on fire on the site of one of its gravel pits, while the tags "*Holcim is shit*" and "*Workers, kill your bosses*" are found on site. The claim, in the form of an ironic open letter to the company, specifies in particular: "*Faced with globalized capitalism and its uninhibited companies, you will agree that sabotage is a relevant, if not necessary, means of resistance. It is a way to regain a grip on our world and to prevent you from shaping it in your own image.*"

5/1, Wuppertal (Germany).
A ticket machine goes up in smoke overnight at the Steinbeck train station: "*This must be both a warning and a foretaste of what will happen to the repressive authorities in Wuppertal, should they decide to evict the currently occupied Osterholz*



| Zines, books & journals |

Edward P. Thompson, *The Forest War. Social Struggles in Eighteenth-Century England* [La guerre des forêts. Lutttes sociales dans l'Angleterre du XVIIIe siècle], ed. La Découverte (Paris), January 2014, 164 pp.

Karl Jacoby, *Crimes Against Nature. Thieves, squatters and poachers: the hidden history of nature conservation in the United States* [Crimes contre la Nature. Voleurs, squatters et braconniers : l'histoire cachée de la conservation de la nature aux Etats-Unis], ed. Anacharsis (Toulouse), February 2021, 448 p.

Since the first translation in 1988 of the major work of the heterodox Marxist historian Edward Palmer Thompson (*The Making of the English Working Class*, 1963), several others have appeared little by little and just as delayed. In addition to his essay on the evolution of the relationship to time in the process of industrialization of Western societies (*Time, Work-Discipline and Industrial Capitalism*, 1967) or his polemical work against structuralist Marxism's reductionist and mechanical character (*The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays*, 1979), it is above all the partial translation of his study on peasant resistance in England that interests us here. In the latter, entitled *Whigs and Hunters: The Origin of the Black Act* (1975), Thompson returns to the terrible *Black Act* passed in 1723 by the English Parliament and then renewed for nearly a century, to follow in the footsteps of bandits, poachers (of deer or fish), and wood or peat collectors engaged in a fight to the death with the authorities, since they were now at risk of being hanged for practices that had been customary until then. A law that also repressed a whole range of other forms of resistance to the royal monopoly on the forest, such as being armed (bow and arrow) and having one's

face hidden (covered in soot), sending threatening letters to the forest guards, cutting down young trees, sabotaging the floodgates of the lordly ponds that were multiplying to the detriment of the peat bogs, etc. It must be said that in the face of the various powers that be, the struggle regularly took offensive turns, as in 1720-22 when the Bishop of Hampshire's park was attacked several times, his herd of deer decimated, his houses burned and his wood destroyed. In the same way, since some landowners claimed to forbid the domestic or artisanal use of wood to anyone in order to reserve the exploitation of it for themselves, we find, for example, coordinated acts of vengeance such as the savage cutting of 600 young trees in the woodland of a nobleman.

If this book can be put in conversation to Karl Jacoby's book on the struggles against the creation of natural parks in the United States at the turn of the 20th century, it is because Thompson is certainly among the sources that inspired him for his way of making history "*from below*". But it is also for their common question on the practices and relationships with the forest, suddenly expropriated and radically transformed by domination. And finally for the controversial thesis that constituted the heart of Thompson's study of the resistance of 18th century English poachers.

In his words, "*law was less an instrument of class power than a central terrain of conflict*" on the grounds that it was able to limit the arbitrariness of the authorities through legal recourse in one sense, and in the other to lighten effective punishment through popular juries sympathetic to the local illegalists. The 18th century English context studied by Thompson and its nascent forestry bureaucracy, however, tells us something quite different. On the one hand, we witness the intensification of the rational exploitation of woods for the benefit of shipbuilding, and on the other hand, the historical shift where the *ownership* of the land becomes individual and absolute, drastically crushing all the last traditional and collective practices of its inhabitants *through the law* and its armed minions: taking peat for heating and cooking, cutting reeds from the ponds for baskets, gleaned at the foot of the oaks to feed the pigs, cutting ferns to make soap, picking fruit from the woods... and of course the hunting of wild game, whereas this was the monopoly of the landowning elites. This change in attitude was the one that quadrupled the number of crimes punishable by death in England between 1689 and 1820, by no longer limiting them essentially to offenses against

forest."

6/1, Saint-Lô (France).

In the English Channel, a new *JCDecaux* billboard is burned down in the night. It is at least the fifth to suffer the same fate since November.

7/1, Cézens (France).

In Cantal, the wind measuring mast installed in October to study a project of twenty wind turbines is sabotaged, and crashes to the ground in the night.

8/1, Vallauris (France).

In the Alpes-Maritimes, the *RN* office is attacked in the night : window broken, padlock ripped off and mailbox lock forced.

9/1, Digne-les-Bains (France).

In the Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, the tourist water park currently under construction was sabotaged during the night by piercing the *liner* of the bottom of the pool with nearly 400 pickaxe strikes.

people, but largely to *offenses against the property* of the owners (and in this case to fences, game, trees, peat bogs, fishponds...). The *Black Act* on the royal forests and lordly domains (1723) was complemented by laws against attacks on road tolls (1735), the burning of coal mines (1737) or the theft of raw materials in factories (1726), multiplying the terror of the gallows to impose the development of modern capitalism.

Well, at the same time, when a brave Marxist historian candidly asserts "*I am not denouncing every law. There will always be laws. We have to fight against bad laws and the application or imposition of them which is biased by class considerations*", not too much can be expected of his work either! This brings us straight to Jacoby's more recent book, which illustrates more than a century later and in a different context how vast so-called natural areas were "preserved" (or rather developed) by the state monopoly, again at the expense of people who had other practices in the forest and their environment. And just as with Thompson, reading this kind of historical study (from a thesis defended in 2001) is not so worthwhile and is of little interest to us for what it defends in the academic field, as for the information and experiences of struggle we can plunder from it in order to deepen the questions that burn for us in the present.

In this matter, beyond the material and let's say almost down-to-earth aspect of the shape-shifting resistance to the imposition of immense domains decreed from one day to the next as "natural" by the State, there are two other aspects that immediately struck us upon reading this book: on the one hand the strategy of progressive integration through wage-earning and the commodification of lumberjacks, trappers, Native Americans (especially the *Havasupais*), small farmers and other refugees far from civilization, in order to overcome their desire for more or less self-sustaining autonomy. And on the other hand, how these environmen-

tal "parks" were conceived from the start as offering an imitation Nature, conceived both as a source of the North American national identity (excluding, by the way, the indigenous populations that occupied this space) and as recreational zones destined for the rich offspring of triumphant industrialism.

To demonstrate this, Jacoby uses three emblematic examples, both for the areas concerned (the forest, the mountains, the desert) and for their respective chronologies (from the 1860s to the 1920s) with the creation of nature reserves in the *Adirondack Mountains*, in *Yellowstone* and in the *Grand Canyon*. Within these "protected areas", the new environmental laws suddenly did not allow local people to use timber, hunt, fish, camp, forage, or slash-and-burn, suddenly turning these survival activities into theft, poaching, illegal fishing, squatting, trespassing, or arson. It should be noted that it was precisely in the name of state ecology that repression was carried out, including hiring forest cops from the population who knew the trails and clandestine practices, and even delegating power to the military (the army occupied *Yellowstone* Park for 32 years in order to prohibit the collection of wood, the grazing of cattle or poaching). The propagandistic use of arguments *already* emphasized the irresponsibility of these poor populations towards nature, in order to chase them out of it... while letting private parks owned by rich industrialists multiply, as well as the ravages linked to the arrival of the railroad, allowing an intensive exploitation of the forest for the manufacture of paper pulp.

As for the suppression of any "natural" complexity within these vast spaces, now regulated and managed, we will share only one example: the military in charge of preserving *Yellowstone* Park massively slaughtered pumas, coyotes, wolves and other predators. This led to a proliferation of elk, which increased pressure on the park's grazing lands, caused soil erosion, and precipitat-

ed the decline of aspen and willow trees, which were among their favorite foods. The beavers that depended on these trees for their dams disappeared, and with them all the wetlands in the Park, disrupting in turn the previous diversity of trees, etc. And so, year after year, the army began to transfer thousands of “surplus” wild animals by rail... to zoos or other natural sites that “lacked” them!

But, what about all the great examples of collective and individual struggles, like the tourist steamboat set ablaze on Lake Placid in 1880, or the poacher who became a stage-coach robber crossing *Yellowstone* Park in 1908, you ask? Well, all this and many other practices such as burning forests rather than leaving the monopoly to the State, we will let you have the joy of discovering them for yourselves!



Earth First!, *Down with the Empire! Up with the Spring! Strategy for a Radical Ecology* [A bas l'empire vive le printemps ! : Stratégie pour une écologie radicale], Divergences (Paris), June 2020, 290 p.

It is curious to note how a text that has been a reference for a whole post-globalization generation on the other side of the English Channel and in the Nordic regions of Europe has taken *no less than seventeen years* to appear in French. Published in 2003 in the tenth and final issue of the English magazine *Do or Die, Voices from the Ecological Resistance*, the anonymous author looks back on a decade of radical ecological activism in the British Isles. Disappointed by the lukewarm reformism of large organizations and NGOs that were quick to launch urgent studies and appeals on the ongoing climate disaster, only to collapse into petitions, appeals to elected officials, public debates aimed at raising awareness or small gestures to save the planet, radical libertarians

were inspired by the birth of the *Earth First!* organization in the United States to launch radical ecological struggles in England and Scotland.

From 1993 onwards, groups of activists launched territorial struggles, multiplying occupations against the construction of new roads (a vast program called “*The Roads to Prosperity*”, launched by Thatcher). These permanent occupations of pieces of land and forests (which at times numbered in the dozens!) were to constitute anchor points for struggles practicing the method of “*non-violent direct action*” (such as sit ins, blockades, tripods, tree occupations, passive resistance), but which were however also backed on occasion by confrontations. Fortunately, it is in this context that the practice of sabotage was also gradually introduced and diffused: “*This generalization of direct action is one of the many hidden but hugely important victories the movement has had.*”

If the author seems to maintain a certain vagueness as to what they generally mean by “direct action” (is it occupations or sabotage of machines?), we learn in passing that collective raids on construction sites would often give rise to more or less improvised attacks on construction machinery, or that small, well-prepared groups carried out significant incendiary sabotage under the cover of night.

From 1998 onwards, these territorial struggles will encounter the heterogeneous movement against globalization, which will hold riotous meetings during international summits. In England, *Earth First!* groups were part of the organization of the *Carnival against Capital*, days of action that invaded the City of London and were punctuated by major clashes. Of course, this eruption of riotous violence soon became one of the dividing lines within *Earth First!* and in many other parts of the movement. The decline of radical environmentalist resistance in

England will eventually become more pronounced from 2001 onwards, and the author can't really explain it (especially since the whole book exudes enthusiasm for an imminent revival of hostilities).

Between people who get tired and settle down, others who distance themselves from the struggles by choosing the "constraints" of a more integrated life (job, family, career,...) and a pinch of repression (which will remain relative, although nasty, with the use of undercover agents, the recruitment of snitches and the assimilation of the most malleable spokespersons), no movement seems to escape it. More generally, *"Two prime contradictions have haunted the radical ecological resistance on this island. British EF! was born as a wilderness defense movement with no wilderness, and evolved into a network of revolutionaries in non-revolutionary times."*

This observation inaugurates the second part of the book, the "four tasks", where it is often a struggle to follow the author in their hypotheses... Some of them seem either far-fetched (such as the theory of "hotspots", areas scattered around the world with a particular biodiversity that should be defended) or largely alternative (such as the proposal to strengthen the counter-culture since, to put it another way, permaculture hippies could then welcome teams of saboteurs on their occupied land - something that obviously sounds good in terms of militant marketing, but seems, for many reasons, to have little chance of working). Finally, when the militant and activist language that quickly becomes tedious is looked past, the last of these proposals (*"supporting rebellion beyond the capitalist core"*) contains both uncritical elements (such as the obligatory praise and call for solidarity with the very Stalinist Kurdish PKK of 2003 - well before the libertarian veneer of Rojava),

but also more interesting directions such as understanding how certain "peripheral struggles" (on sacrificed territories, within indigenous communities,...) are sometimes bearers of autonomy and radical resistance against the advancement of this civilisation which is fueled by technical development.

Ultimately, despite an occasionally irritating lack of depth in favor of activism alone (which can also be explained by the fact that this text was written from a very fresh experience in order to launch a call for a revival of radical and libertarian environmentalist struggles), this book on the British *Earth First!* gives a vast overview of a period that seems to be relatively unknown on this side of the Channel. This is all the more interesting, especially in terms of a review of past experiences, as an intensification of hostilities against the technoworld and a radical approach to climate change both seem to be, how shall we say it, on the menu.

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